

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Amendment with Remarks along with a Request for Continued Examination.

Amendments to the Claims

Independent claims 1, 16, and 22 are amended to clarify that the locking mechanism engages at least two *outer* surfaces of the mating component. Support for this amendment can be found throughout the specification and in the drawings.

Applicants also add new independent claim 26, which includes the limitations of claims 1 and 8. The Examiner has indicated that claim 8 represents allowable subject matter, and thus new claim 26 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections

The Examiner rejects claims 1-7, 12, and 14-22 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,173,215 of Shover. As noted above, independent claims 1, 16, and 22 each require that the locking mechanism engage two *outer* surfaces of the mating component. Shover does not teach or even suggest such a locking mechanism. To the contrary, as shown in Figure 1 of Shover, the locking mechanism (18) is a screw that threads into a bore formed in a jaw (13), and thus the locking mechanism engages an *inner* surface of jaw (8). Shover also fails to teach a locking mechanism that is slideably moveable, as further required by claims 1, 16, and 22. The Examiner argues that the threaded connection of Shover is slideable, noting that “slide” is defined as “to move along in continuous contact with a smooth surface” (Office Action, p. 3). The screw of Shover does not include a *smooth* surface, but rather has threads formed thereon. The locking mechanism therefore does not “slide” according to the definition afforded by the Examiner.

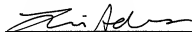
Accordingly, independent claims 1, 16, and 22 distinguish over Shover and represent allowable subject matter. Claims 2-7, 12, 15, and 17-21 are allowable at least because they depend from an allowable base claim.

Conclusion

Accordingly, all claims are now in condition for allowance, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney for Applicants if such communication is deemed to expedite prosecution of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Adams, Reg. No. 44,238
Attorney for Applicant(s)

Nutter McClennen & Fish LLP
World Trade Center West
155 Seaport Boulevard
Boston, MA 02210
Tel: (617)439-2550
Fax: (617)310-9550

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